

Weekly National Intelligencer.

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Weekly National Intelligencer.

By GALE & SEATON.

JAMES C. WELLING, ASSOCIATE EDITOR.
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NEW YEAR'S DAY.

It is once more our privilege and pleasure to greet the readers of the National Intelligencer on the advent of a New Year, and to tender them our best wishes for their happiness and prosperity during all the months that shall mark its course.

The auspices under which the day breaks upon the land speak, indeed, rather of toil and endurance than of ease or enjoyment. But if we have fallen on evil times they none the less come to every citizen with their adjuration to manly effort. If there ever was a season when the voice of the siren, Sloth, might surely count on her votaries, that season has certainly passed away at an hour when, alike in the council-chamber of the legislator, the bureau of the Cabinet, and in the "tented field," so many incentives call the actors in this solemn crisis to high-minded thought and heroic enterprise.

The year which is just closed has been fertile in great events, but it is not presumptuous to say that the year which has now dawned upon us is pregnant with events that shall be still more momentous, because destined in all human probability to fix for years the fate of the Republic. The curtain which hangs like the impenetrable veil of Isis before the future that awaits us no hand may presume to lift, and the wisest seers confess to have lost their power to divine. But every citizen, whether in public or in private life, whether in exalted or in humble station, can resolutely address himself each day to the day's appointed duties, "as ever in the sight of the Great Taskmaster's eye," and, if faithfully performing those duties, each in his allotted sphere, may safely leave the issue of the great strife to be guided to its predestined end by the hand of Him who led His ancient people through the wilderness like a flock, and whose throne in the heavens abideth forever.

RIGHTS OF CITIZENSHIP.

We have received, in pamphlet form, a copy of the opinion pronounced by Mr. Attorney General Bates in answer to the question whether "a man is legally incapacitated to be a citizen of the United States by the sole fact that he is a colored and not a white man."

This question arose under our navigation laws, and was propounded to the Attorney General by the Secretary of the Treasury under the following circumstances: A schooner of New Brunswick (N.J.) was detained by a revenue cutter of the Government at South Amboy, in that State, because commanded by a "colored man," and so by a person not held and deemed "a citizen of the United States." Mr. CHASE, therefore, submitted the inquiry raised by the commander of the revenue cutter, whether "colored men" may be citizens of the United States, and therefore competent to be the masters of vessels under the navigation laws regulating our coasting trade.

Premitting any response to the question whether it is legally possible for a slave to be a citizen of the United States, as not coming within the scope of the inquiry raised by the case in hand, the distinguished law officer of the Government proceeds with great acumen and logical discrimination to discuss the essential nature and intrinsic quality of citizenship. Drawing a line of demarcation between the political powers and privileges secured to certain classes of citizens and the fundamental quality of citizenship regarded in its pure and simple essence, he arrives at the conclusion that a "free man of color, if born in the United States, is a citizen of the United States, and, if otherwise qualified, is competent, under the acts of Congress, to be the master of a vessel engaged in the coasting trade."

Mr. Bates holds that "every person born in this country is at the moment of birth *prima facie* a citizen." To disprove this citizenship "some great disfranchisement" must be shown to override the "natural born" claim. Voting and holding office are not tests of citizenship, nor do they necessarily accompany it. Female and juvenile citizens are not voters, and the spectacle has been presented of a person holding office while professing foreign allegiance. Mr. Bates cites the case of Gen. Bernard, who for a long time held the office of General of Engineers in our military service, and who all the time avowed his French allegiance. The Constitution ordains nothing in regard to color, race, or condition, as the terms of citizenship. It admits of no class of people intermediate between aliens and citizens. We have no "denizens" in the sense that that term is employed in the English law. Attorney General Legare did indeed apply that term to free colored persons, in an opinion in which he reached the conclusion that "a free colored man, a native of this country," could pre-empt land under the act of September, 1841, which act declares that a pre-emptor must be a citizen of the United States, or one who has declared his intention to be such.

Mr. Bates proceeds, in the course of his argument, to review other decisions bearing on the subject, and gives to the whole topic the fullest and most critical discussion it has ever received in the history of our jurisprudence.

We shall take the earliest available opportunity to lay the opinion at length before our readers, when we may accompany it with an analysis of its contents and an appreciation of its conclusions.

FOREIGN MEDIATION.

At the close of the last month we placed before our readers the official notes that had been recently exchanged between the French and English Governments in reference to a projected mediation on the part of the three Courts of France, Great Britain, and Russia, with a view of so combining their counsels in the interest of the two belligerent parties to our civil war as "to help them out of a position which seems to have no issue."

In commenting on these papers at the time we took occasion to draw attention to the fact that what the French Emperor proposed was simply friendly mediation, and not at all intervention, properly so called. It was in this light that both the British and the Russian Government understood and answered the proposition, and both concurred in the opinion that at that time any such "mediation" would be inopportune and tend only to defeat the friendly purpose which all the Governments professed to have at heart.

As we have previously said, in discussing reported projects of foreign mediation, it is apparent that any pacification must, in the end, depend upon the temper and condition of the respective belligerents. In a word, it must come from within, and can never be imposed on a reluctant people from without by any Power or combination of Powers. And this is virtually the declared opinion of the British Government, as announced by Earl Russell, when, in reply to M. Drouyn de Lhuys, he writes as follows:

"Her Majesty's Government think that it would be better to wait carefully the progress of opinion in America, and if, as there appears reason to hope, it may be found to have undergone, or may undergo hereafter, any change, the three Courts might then avail themselves of such change to offer their friendly counsel with a greater prospect than ever of its being accepted by the two contending parties."

On the first of the present month we took occasion to say that if "the war which now desolates so large a portion of our land is ever to come to an end, as in the nature of things it must do at some future day, it is easy to foresee that its close will be either preceded or marked by some kind of 'negotiations' between the National Government and the insurgent populations of the Seceded States."

Nothing short of the extermination of the latter, which nobody contemplates, can remove the occasion for some definitive ascertainment of their political status after the military power shall have been wholly or partially withdrawn from their territory. This is equally true whatever is destined to be the event of the war. And it was in forecast of this inevitable stage appointed, to be reached at the conclusion of the strife that President LINCOLN, in his Inaugural Address, warned his Southern countrymen against its beginning in the following terms, and, as if to give emphasis to them, he recalled and recited the same words in his late annual message:

"Physically speaking, we cannot separate. We cannot remove our respective sections from each other, nor build an impassable wall between them. A husband and wife may be divorced, and go out of the presence and beyond the reach of each other; but the different parts of our country cannot do this. They cannot but remain face to face; and intercourse, either amicable or hostile, must continue between them. It is possible, then, to make that intercourse more advantageous or more satisfactory after separation than before. Can aliens make treaties easier than friends can make laws? Can treaties be more faithfully enforced between aliens than laws can among friends? Suppose you go to war, you cannot fight always; and when you cease fighting, you must begin by negotiating. We cannot ignore this fact. We cannot regard the preferable itself as an act of gross kindness. Give us an intelligent, capable, upright genius, and we would urge that our Government should accept it and appear before it prepared to prove that the union of our States is a geographical and political necessity; that the North cannot possibly be fighting to subjugate the South; seeing that the Government's fight is for that which has generally secured the sway of the South—and that slavery, nothing but slavery, seeks the dissolution and overthrow of the American Republic. Only secure a stable and candid tribunal, and we should be willing to submit without fear to its arbitration."

There are three ways in which it has been proposed to end the war.

One is "to conquer a peace" by military movements, conducted on military principles and directed against the military power of the insurgents. This way seems lately to have fallen into disrepute.

Another, and with some a favorite plan, proposed to conquer the insurgents by plying them with paper "proclamations of freedom," calling on the "loyal blacks" to desert the service of their "rebel masters" and flock to the banners of the Union. It is perhaps proper that those who were earliest and most confident in predicting the success of this plan should now be the first to disavow its foreseen failure by invoking "foreign mediation" as the third and last resort for ending the war—"by arbitration."

CONNECTICUT.

The special session of the Legislature of Connecticut lasted only two weeks. It does not appear that much business was done. The militia law of the State was amended, and an act was passed to secure the right of voting to the troops of the State who are now in the army. A committee was sent to the army to find out how the men were cared for. Its members saw all the Connecticut regiments, and, though they made no formal report, gave assurance that every possible attention was paid to the wants of the sick and wounded. The Legislature, however, placed in the hands of the Governor the sum of \$10,000 to be expended as his judgment may suggest in finding out and relieving the wants of the troops.

FROM THE ARMY OF THE POTOMAC.

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF POTOMAC, Wednesday, December 31st.
A reconnaissance in force went out yesterday morning, which will probably be heard from in a few days.

It is believed here that a considerable portion of Gen. Lee's army has moved from its late position in our front and gone up the Rappahannock. Its destination, however, is not known.

It has been asserted by flag of truce that Captain Swearingen, of the late Brig. Gen. Jackson's staff, who was reported killed in the battle of the 13th instant, was only wounded and captured. He is now doing well, at a farm-house about four miles in rear of the enemy's front.

Lieut. Eddy, ordnance officer of Gen. Whipple's staff, is a prisoner in Richmond. He was unhurt in the battle.

ADVANCE ON MURFREESBORO.

LOUISVILLE, Dec. 30, 10 P. M.—Gen. Rosecrans captured several cannon on his approach to Murfreesboro, and reports from below indicate an engagement progressing at that place.

PHILADELPHIA, Dec. 31.—The Inquirer has advice from Nashville that the army of Gen. Rosecrans has moved on the rebels, driving them before him. There was considerable heavy skirmishing. The Federals are in high spirits and are anxious for a fight. On Monday the advance of Rosecrans was in sight of Murfreesboro. The enemy, in full view, were drawn up in line of battle. A battle was expected on Tuesday.

PRESSING THE REBELS IN ARKANSAS.

ST. LOUIS, Dec. 31.—Gen. Blunt telegraphs to Gen. Curtis, under date of Buena Vista, (Ark.) December 28th, as follows:

"My long-range guns are now shelling the rebel camp across the river five miles below here. If the enemy does not retreat during the night, I shall endeavor to cross my troops over in the morning and offer them battle."

"Among the property captured are four steamers heavily laden with supplies, and a ferry-boat with a large amount of ammunition."

"Quite a number of the enemy were killed."

REPULSE OF THE GUERRILLA MORGAN.

LOUISVILLE, Dec. 30, 10 P. M.—Col. Harlan attacked Morgan at Rolling Fork yesterday morning. The engagement lasted an hour and a half. Harlan killed and wounded a number of rebels, losing two killed and three wounded. The rebels retreated towards Bardonia, having lost several killed and wounded, and a captain and six privates captured. Morgan spent last night at Bardonia, and moved eastward on the Springfield turnpike. A messenger reports to Harlan that our forces had an engagement at New Haven this morning and repulsed the rebels there.

Sheppardsville and Rolling Fork bridges are safe. The trestle-work on Muldraugh's Hill is so seriously damaged that it will require a month for its restoration. Two small bridges, which can be easily restored, were burned by the rebels near Lebanon Junction. The above comprises all the damage done by the rebels to bridges on the Louisville and Nashville railroad and its tributaries.

NEW MADRID RE-OCCUPIED.

CAIRO, Dec. 30.—New Madrid is to be re-occupied. The thirty-eight Iowa went there to-day. All is quiet at Columbus.

CAPTURES IN LOUISIANA.

The New Orleans Delta of the 20th ultimo says: "We learn from a gentleman just arrived from Berwick's Bay that an expedition sent up through Grand Lake, Pass Chicot, and the Atchafalaya by Commodore Buchanan, succeeded in capturing two steamers, the Nanipoe and the Southern Merchant, and a launch. The steamers were loaded with sugar, and the launch with arms, ammunition, and small brass pieces. The crews deserted the boats when the gunboat made its appearance and took to the woods. The expedition was a complete success, and much damage was inflicted on the enemy."

THE MISSISSIPPI EXPEDITION.

The "Mississippi Expedition," about which so much has been said and so little known, is already on the way, or perhaps by this time has arrived at its destination. Its commanding officer is not Gen. McClelland, but Gen. Sherman. We suspect that the object has been all along to keep the name of Gen. McClelland prominent as the organizer of this expedition at Cairo, for a strategic purpose, while the expedition was, in fact, getting ready to start and moving from a different point.

The Mississippi expedition is of a much more formal character than is generally supposed. Its organization embraces three grand divisions, of which Gen. A. J. Smith is the right. Gen. Morgan is the center, and Gen. George W. Morgan is the left. The number of troops embraced in these corps we, of course, cannot say; but it may be relied upon that it will require a rebel force of not less than fifty or sixty thousand men to make any thing like successful opposition. The composition of this army is entirely Northwestern, our own State having therein no small representation.

In addition to and independent of this expedition is an army, said to number sixty thousand men, at Helena, Arkansas, under Gen. Steele. That army, as we see by the recent order for transports, is about to move, if it is not already in motion. What part in the grand drama of war in the Southwest this army is destined to perform will not long remain secret.—Chicago Post of December 27th.

MISSOURI LEGISLATURE.

JEFFERSON CITY, (Mo.) Dec. 30.—Both Houses of the Legislature completed their organization to-day by the election of all the emancipation candidates.

There seems to have been a general feeling that Congress should lead off in the emancipation movement, and there is no doubt a prompt and liberal tender of compensation would greatly facilitate the emancipation measure in the Legislature.

There is a strong prospect that the Senatorial position will be disposed of this week. By the constitution of this State simply a majority is required to pass any bill over the Governor's veto.

ANOTHER VIRGINIA CONGRESSMAN.

A Norfolk letter states that the Congressional election in that district has resulted in the selection of J. C. McLeod for the Thirty-seventh Congress. He is a native Virginian, and has resided in the State all his life. The vote polled in Norfolk was as large as usual, considering the circumstance of the many male inhabitants now absent in the rebel army or otherwise beyond our lines."

THE GUERRILLAS IN WESTERN KENTUCKY.

The New Albany Ledger says there is no longer reason to doubt that the design of the rebels in Tennessee is to make a well-planned raid upon the lower Ohio towns. It has direct information of such a movement toward Paducah and Smithland, the object being to blockade the lower Ohio. It is reported that there are over two thousand rebels scattered in Lyon, Caldwell, Trigg, Christian, Hopkins, and Grove counties, which can be concentrated at short notice. A sufficient number of troops are being dispatched to points between Louisville and Henderson to protect the border.

The United States ship Saratoga, Capt. Gladly, arrived at Philadelphia on Saturday from the west coast of Africa, where she has been stationed for the last two years. Notwithstanding the unhealthiness of the station, not one of the officers or crew that were taken on board the ship died. She was relieved by the ship St. Louis.

FROM MEXICO.

Accounts from Vera Cruz to the 7th of December state that Gen. Forey was still at Orizaba, completing his preparations for an early advance on the city of Mexico, so as not to be checked on the way by Gen. Ortega, who is at Puebla at the head of a strong force, or by Juarez, who is fortifying Mexico. The head of Gen. Forey's two columns, under Gen. Barter and Bayane, had reached San Andres Chalchicomula and San Augustin del Palmar, two military positions commanding the road to Puebla. The French, it is said, were cordially received by the inhabitants of Matamoros. Miramon has declared himself a warm supporter of French intervention, and works in connexion with Almonte to secure its success.

The Mexican Congress has issued a manifesto against the French invasion, and an appeal to the people to resist it to the last extremity. It is a spirited document. They say that the French Emperor has no right to settle their domestic difficulties, and that he is attempting to deceive the world when he says he does not send war but happiness to the Mexicans. They say that they will never accept the least foreign intervention in their affairs, or in their social and political organization; that Juarez having been constitutionally elected Chief Magistrate of the Republic, they will never consent to receive the law from a foreign Power, however powerful it may be, however numerous and warlike may be the armies with which the country is invaded, but that they will oppose, now and always, until the legal term of his power is concluded, his separation from the post which he so worthily occupies.

By way of Havana we have Gen. Prim's defence before the Spanish Cortes of his course in Mexico. It contains nothing that has not been previously published. Gen. Prim expressed his opinion that the French forces would enter the city of Mexico, but that the expedition would be costly and without result, and the war protracted.

THE CASE OF COMMANDER PREBLE.

The following official document sets forth the reasons for the dismissal of Commander Preble from the Navy:

"NAVY DEPARTMENT, DECEMBER 12, 1862.
"SIR: The Board convened for the purpose of considering the case of Mr. George H. Preble having reported that in its opinion Commander Preble did not perform his duty in entering the harbor of Oretu, he requested permission to give briefly some of the reasons which have guided it to this decision."

"1st. The failure to arrest the Oretu turns, in Commander Preble's three reports submitted to the Board, upon the stationery of her character, the Oretu's conduct, that she was an English man-of-war. The practices of the sea supplies a mode of ascertaining the character of a suspicious vessel, similar to the challenge of a sentinel on post. If the challenging or signal gun had been fired in practice in such cases, the real character of the Oretu would have been so far made apparent that Commander Preble would have been aware of the necessity of stopping her."

"2d. Owing to this neglect, the advantages of time and of position were lost, and both of these advantages were still further thrown away—first, by halting, which is not customary or proper in such circumstances; and, secondly, by waiting to fire more than one shot across the Oretu's bow."

"3d. The Board does not, by the three reports submitted to it, arrive at the conclusion that the Oretu's conduct was such as to justify her being mistaken for a British man-of-war."

"4th. The Board is of the opinion that when Commander Preble arrived at the conclusion that the Oretu was a British man-of-war, he had no just motive, in this conclusion, for not proceeding to resist with force an attempted violation of the blockade."

"5th. The proceedings in these cases in blockading service is the same with all nations. A signal gun, fired by the stationery or cruising vessel, conveys to the strange ship a determination to communicate, a challenge, to a ship, and a desire to be informed of his character. It is generally answered by a gun, and the strange ship places himself in a situation to be easily approached. If, after this signal, the strange ship, the former should fire a shot, then the latter, if a man-of-war of a foreign nation, would return the fire."

"6th. Finally, Commander Preble admits that if he had known the true character of the Oretu he could have boarded her; or, in other words, that she was in his power; and his failure to perform his whole duty consists in his not proceeding to resist with force an attempted violation of the blockade."

"Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
"A. H. FOOTE,
"Rear Admiral and Senior Officer,
"Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy."

BALTIMORE COUNCILS AND GEN. SCHENCK.
On Friday morning last the members of the two branches of the City Councils of Baltimore, after assembling in their respective chambers, made a formal visit to Major General Schenck, commanding the Eighth Army Corps, having his headquarters in Baltimore. The gentleman selected to address the General upon the part of the Councils was D. H. HOOPER, Esq., who was introduced by Maj. Lynch, of the General's staff, after which Mr. Hooper introduced a number of the members of the municipal bodies. This call upon Gen. Schenck was made without previous notification, and whilst he was earnestly engaged in official duties. A very feeling and appropriate address was made by Mr. Hooper, being responsive mainly to Gen. Schenck's official address upon assuming the command of the Middle Military District.

Gen. SCHENCK, in reply, remarked that it was gratifying to him to meet the Councils of Baltimore on the occasion, and the spirit and tone of the address of Mr. Hooper could not but receive the warm appreciation of every loyal man in the entire country. There was an unusuality in the political and patriotic principles of the Councils of the city which reflected honor upon its citizens, and which could be initiated with great advantage to the national cause over other corporate bodies. In all his official conduct here he wished the members of the Council to understand that he would not measure a man by his cloth nor by his equipment. So far from that, he held him who hailed cotton through the streets of the city, and that he would soon have to haul, and was true to his Government, in far high esteem as the man who resided in brown stone mansions in the Monumental squares of the city. Ancient heritage, wealth, or influence of family would no longer command his attention than the claims of the poorest and most unpretending loyal citizen residing within the limits of the Middle Department.

The General excused himself from any further remarks, again said he was happy in being called upon by the Councils, and hoped that in the discharge of his duties he would continue to receive their approbation.

A few introductions followed, when the members retired, leaving a pleasant memory.

SCIENTIFIC WORK.

We have for several days had on our table a quarto volume of 520 pages, entitled "Astronomical and Meteorological Observations," made at the United States Naval Observatory during the year 1861, containing the annual report of the Superintendent of the Observatory, Commander J. M. GILLIES, of the various scientific operations executed at this establishment during the preceding year. We are of course not competent to estimate critically the value of this addition to the science of the country, which will doubtless receive proper notice from competent scientific authorities elsewhere. We hold ourselves, however, over, (and in saying this we do feel as if laying any great weight upon our conscience,) quite competent to appreciate the high administrative abilities of Captain Gillies, the present Superintendent, in having, so soon after the close of the year, given to the public a work of such magnitude, involving evidently so much labor of discussion and computation. It affords, we think, gratifying evidence that, in these unhappy days, the Observatory at least has not suffered by a change of masters.

IMPORTANT TESTIMONY.

The Waterbury (Conn.) American publishes the following important letter from the Hon. Lyman W. Coe, of that city. Mr. Coe is a member of the Senate of Connecticut, and was appointed chairman of the committee appointed by the Legislature, after the battle of Fredericksburg, to visit the Connecticut soldiers in the Army of the Potomac and report their wants and condition. He is a leading Republican and a gentleman of high character and reputation, so that his report of the condition of the army has all the force of an official record. Here is his letter:

HEADQUARTERS HOSPITAL, Second Brigade, Second Army Corps, Near Fredericksburg, Dec. 21, 1862.
I have visited the 8th, 11th, 15th, 16th, and 21st regiments, in Harlan's brigade, ninth army corps, and the 14th and 27th, in the second army corps, and shall go to-morrow in search of the 5th, 17th, and 20th regiments, if we can find them. And here I will say that there is difficulty in finding a regiment, as we found in looking up the 27th regiment yesterday, for they are continually moving their headquarters like a city of 200,000 inhabitants without a directory, and the streets not numbered, and then on the move at that."

You have no idea of the depression there is in the army at the result of this third attempt to go to Richmond. That it is a complete failure no one can deny. The causes of it may be an open question, but one thing is certain: that there will have to be a different management or we shall not be a nation much to boast of. I have found it to be a rule over us. I do not write what I think to you, from what I can gather in the limited time I have had for observation and thought; but this is certain, that the President has got to stop acting as Commander-in-Chief, a part of his Cabinet be removed, and another man placed at the head of the army, politicians in and out of Congress silenced, and, more than all, the people take hold of the interests of the country, stop carrying on the war for selfish ends, and also keep quiet and let the army alone."

I have found, but one opinion in the army about the merits of General. The army almost to a man are for McClelland, and if you expect the army to conquer a peace you have got to give them a choice. It is as clear to me as the sunshine, and that too with the best feeling for Burnside, which is much respected by all, but he has not the capacity for the moving of an army of this magnitude. Yours, truly,
L. W. COE.

It is needless to quote the words of certain "On to Richmond" journals in regard to the fight at Fredericksburg, in which they have referred to that battle as illustrating an energy immensely preferable to a more dilatory and possibly a more satisfactory policy. We find, however, in the London Times of the 12th the following sentence, which graphically and exhaustively expresses the state of mind existing in this country at the period to which it alludes. It must be remembered that the Times of the date mentioned was speaking of the facts developed in the latest American news, say to about the first of the present month. It says:

"There is one earnest desire which occupies the very souls of the Government party of the Northern States—they are yearning for a General who will try to take Richmond. If they could only get a man who would make an effort, it would satisfy them. If they had a General who would bombard an open city of Fredericksburg, there would be something to boast of. If Burnside would even get himself killed and the unlucky army of the Potomac destroyed, it would show heart and nerve for the cause."

The very next day Burnside did move on the enemy's works in a manner that showed "heart and nerve," with results too well known to require recapitulation. The people are hardly satisfied with the "effort" already made, and are certainly willing to take Richmond by storm and less sanguinary processes.—N. Y. Com. Advertiser.

REBEL INVASION OF KENTUCKY.

From the Louisville Journal of December 27.
The fact that a formidable force, under Kirby Smith and John Morgan, is again in the very heart of our State cannot and need not be disguised. The Louisville and Nashville railroad, the only line of communication between this city and Nashville, and the only thoroughfare through which the grand army of the Cumberland can at present receive supplies, has been damaged to such an extent, that transportation over that route must cease.

The latest and most reliable information we have received from the line of the railroad we obtained from the conductor, Capt. Swinney, who returned from Sonora last evening in charge of the train which left this city yesterday morning with ammunition and other supplies for our forces at Green river.

When the train arrived at Sonora, ten miles below Elizabethtown, those on board heard rapid and heavy firing at Munfordsville, and there is but little doubt that an engagement took place there yesterday. Capt. Swinney felt his way with his train to a point about half a mile below Sonora, where the track is skirted by heavy timber. The train had no sooner arrived at the wood than it was fired upon by rebel cavalry, a portion of the force galloping off at full speed, as if they were endeavoring to get in the rear of the train. No damage was done to the train, nor was any person on board injured. Eighteen or twenty rebel cavalrymen were seen at another point in that vicinity, but they made no hostile demonstration. When the train halted to let Elizabethtown last evening it was reported that the rebel pickets were clearing that place.

We were slow to believe the report that a rebel force of eleven thousand had crossed the Cumberland near Hartsville, on their way to the interior of Kentucky, but this morning the report of the rebel cavalry on the line of the Louisville and Nashville railroad removes all doubt upon that score. There may be some connection, too, between the rumored advances of Gen. Floyd and Humphrey Marshall from Northeast in Kentucky, and the movement of the rebels in the southern portion of the State, as it is not unlikely that the armies approaching from either direction might unite at a junction in the Bluegrass region, and another raid upon the capital of the State.

FROM MEMPHIS.

The Memphis Argus of the 23d ultimo gives the following account of the recent movements of a small guerrilla band in that vicinity, whose presence so excited the population that the numbers of the enemy were magnified in despatches sent North to an army of some thousands:

"On Saturday night a company of guerrillas (not regular cavalry) appeared on Wolf river, two or three miles from the city. They were in command of Capt. Burrows, formerly a minister of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, but who for the past six months has been engaged, with his present company, in cotton-burning and 'looting' about generally. His company are guerrillas, in the generally accepted sense of the term, and we understand not regularly in the Confederate service, nor as such recognized by it. They have been operating during the past two or three months in the northern portion of this county, Tipton, and Fayette."

Early on Sunday morning they arrived at the Fair Grounds, and during the forenoon a squad entered the upper portion of our northern suburb, Chelsea, creating considerable excitement. They came by the Raleigh road, and remained a couple of hours. A small whiskey shop attracted their attention, and, finding means to enter, they helped themselves to a quantity of tobacco and a liberal share of 'chain-lightning.' If any provisions came in their way they would double appropriate them. We are informed that forty or fifty head of cattle were driven before them on their return to the main force. Nothing was heard of their whereabouts yesterday, and we presume they moved off towards Raleigh."

MOVEMENT OF IRON-CLADS.

We learn from Fort Monroe that two of our iron-clads, the Monitor and Passaic, went to sea on Monday, accompanied by two gunboats, and followed by the British frigate Melampus. Nothing is known of their destination, though there are various surmises as to the probable point against which they will make a practical trial of their weighty armor. The iron-clad Montauk, Capt. Worden, arrived in Hampton Roads on Monday.

A DISTRESSING SHIPWRECK.

SAN FRANCISCO, Dec. 27.—The ship Sea King, which sailed from this port on the 9th of September for Liverpool, loaded with wheat, was totally lost when ten days out. All on board were lost except the third mate, who was picked up by the barque Eugene and carried to Peru.

THE BATTLE OF FREDERICKSBURG.

Extracts of a Letter from an Army Chaplain at Fredericksburg.

CAMP OF EIGHTH REG'T N. J. VOL'S, Near Falmouth, (Va.) Dec. 19, 1862.

Of course you have heard very full particulars of the recent movements about Fredericksburg. We see no papers here at all. It would seem that papers were a contraband article, so sedulously are they kept from the eyes of the troops—whether for good, or evil, I think, a question. Nevertheless, a few incidents related by an eye-witness may not prove uninteresting.

We all waited long and anxiously for the expected attack, marvelling at the lapse of time, especially as Sumner had summoned the city to surrender long since, and we knew that every day's delay was advantageous to the enemy, and so far fatal to ourselves. We began to think that no movement would be made, and that we were doomed to "winter quarters" upon the banks of the Rappahannock. But the season of inaction ceased suddenly. The call to arms sounded throughout the "lines," and in a single night every thing was ready for the attack and the press "forward," as we trusted, direct into Richmond, over a broken and demoralized foe.

Thursday morning, the 11th instant, saw the entire army in motion, massing in some places, marching to the right or left, or making their way direct to the river. The passage across was warmly contested, and cost us many valuable lives. To lay the pontoons was difficult and hazardous; and after all the passage across and the first entry into the city had to be made in the boats by volunteers called out for that special purpose. Among the volunteers who thus crossed, and who lost his life thereby, was an esteemed personal friend—Rev. Mr. Fuller, of the Sixteenth Massachusetts Volunteers. Although the heaviest possible command was kept up on our part from the bluffs on this side the river, it seemed to tell with little effect upon the enemy. Their works were concealed. All the advantage of position was theirs. Their line of battle was a semi-circle, arranged on the heights beyond the plain that lie back of and reach far to the right and left of Fredericksburg. The heights were also skirted by thick woods. Their advantage of position subsequently told fearfully upon our forces, all exposed, not only by the direct fire they could bring to bear, but by an enfilading fire, which did terrible execution. Thursday was productive of little success to us. Friday (12th) witnessed the renewal of the artillery combat; and during the day we were enabled to secure the pontoon bridges and to throw heavy bodies of troops to the other side. Heavy skirmishing, rather than fighting, on the part of the infantry alone, characterized the day. Our loss was heavy, much more so than the enemy's, who was not at all exposed.

On Saturday (13th) the heavy work was done, the hardest fighting took place, and the severest losses were incurred. Early in the morning of that day I took my position on a high bluff, from which a battery was playing upon the enemy's works back of the city. We had not then crossed the river, and I witnessed the thoughts and horrors of war and this wicked rebellion, the sky was grim and inspiring in all directions. On the open ground back of where I stood was massed Hooker's grand division, and some other troops, consisting of perhaps fifty thousand, of all arms. They were swayed with anxiety and suspense as the battle progressed. They were all looking towards the city, and were anxious to take part in the day's struggle. It was a clear, beautiful day. Arms glinted everywhere. Gay uniforms added to the gaily light appearance of all things. But the thunder of artillery, and the roar of battle, and the deep anxiety apparent on all faces, told too well that the holiday time was transcending, but terrible, serious, awful war. Beyond the river heavy bodies of soldiers filled the plains, passed in some directions, forming long lines of battle in others. The centre of attraction, however, were the heights that rose up to the rear of the city. On these heights were plainly visible the enemy's batteries, and the heavy earthworks loaded with artillery. Across the plains from the city and up those heights were marching, steadily, bravely, stubbornly, our brave men—the jaws of death! In an attempt to storm the position. On, on they went; up, up, almost to the very summits of the hills, where the enemy stood. There was a whole division apparently of our troops. But as they rose over the crest of the heights, and prepared, with loud shouts, to rush upon the enemy, he opened upon them from a most terrific and incessant fire of grape and canister. The ranks were mowed down, and the survivors fled in confusion. The enemy's position was now exposed. They replied with spirit for a time, but they exposed a position not a mortal could stand. We knew what the result must be. We held our breath, and, scarcely moved, strained our vision to the utmost, but, scarcely really forced itself upon us. The lines wavered, swayed to and fro, and broke in wild disorder. We may not have known the cause, but they did not; they did what they could. They were mowed down, and the survivors fled in confusion. They replied with spirit for a time, but they exposed a position not a mortal could stand. We knew what the result must be. We held our breath, and, scarcely moved, strained our vision to the utmost, but, scarcely really forced itself upon us. The lines wavered, swayed to and fro, and broke in wild disorder. We may not have known the cause, but they did not; they did what they could. They were mowed down, and the survivors fled in confusion. They replied with spirit for a time, but they exposed a position not a mortal could stand. We knew what the result must be. We held our breath, and, scarcely moved, strained our vision to the utmost, but, scarcely really forced itself upon us. The lines wavered, swayed to and fro, and broke in wild disorder. We may not have known the cause, but they did not; they did what they could. They were mowed down, and the survivors fled in confusion. They replied with spirit for a time, but they exposed a position not a mortal could stand. We knew what the result must be. We held our breath, and, scarcely moved, strained our vision to the